

### **Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

### **Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1 to 41 (cancelled).

Claim 42 (currently amended): A method of operating a gaming system including a plurality of instructions, said method comprising receiving an initial value amount from a player through an input device and, for a single game session:

- (a) ~~receiving a wager from a player, the wager corresponding to determining a~~  
value total balance of a plurality of credits, the value total balance being  
funded by the initial value amount;
- (b) causing at least one display device to display indicating a balance the  
value total balance of the credits, the value total balance being:
  - (1) separate from the initial value amount, and
  - (2) divisible into a plurality of fees, each one of the fees being of  
an amount and including at least part of one of the credits;
- (c) causing at least one processor to execute the plurality of instructions to  
activate activating a game session for a game for to be played one or  
more times during an activation period, the activation period being  
divisible into a plurality of time intervals;
- (d) during the activated game session activation period for the single gaming  
session:
  - (1) receiving a plurality of play inputs from the player;
  - (2) in response to each one of the play inputs:
    - (i) causing the at least one processor to execute the plurality of  
instructions to perform performing a play of the game; and
    - (ii) providing at least one of a plurality of different outcomes  
based on the play of the game, at least one of the outcomes

corresponding to an award, the award having an award value;

- (3) for each one of the time intervals of the activation period, causing the at least one processor to execute the plurality of instructions to automatically deduct deducting one of the fees from the value total balance, wherein the amount of the fee deducted deduction being is independent of any of the play inputs and the provided outcomes; and
- (4) causing the at least one processor to execute the plurality of instructions to, for each one of the provided outcomes which corresponds to one of the awards, add adding the award value of the award to the value total balance, and causing the added award value to extend extending the activation period of the game session;
- ~~(e) determining which one of a plurality of events occurs first, the events including:~~
  - ~~(1) a termination input received from the player; and~~
  - ~~(2) the balance falling below a minimum level required for playing the game;~~
- ~~(f)(e)~~ causing the at least one processor to execute the plurality of instructions to continue continuing the activation period of the game session until one of a plurality of events occurs, the events including: the determined event occurs
  - (1) a termination input received from the player; and
  - (2) the value total balance falling below a minimum level required for any subsequent play of the game during the activation period; and
- ~~(g)(f)~~ providing a the current value total balance payout to the player in response to the termination input being received when the balance is above zero.

Claim 43 (previously presented): The method of Claim 42, wherein for each time interval, said fees are equal to each other.

Claim 44 (previously presented): The method of Claim 42, wherein each time interval is an equal interval of time.

Claim 45 (cancelled).

Claim 46 (currently amended): The method of Claim 42, which includes causing the at least one display device to ~~indicating~~ indicate the at least one payout.

Claim 47 (currently amended): The method of Claim 42, which includes: ~~(a)~~(g) receiving a pause input during the game session; and ~~(b)~~(h) causing the at least one processor to execute the plurality of instructions to stop ~~stopping~~ the deducting step at least temporarily in response to the pause input.

Claim 48 (withdrawn): A method of operating a gaming system, said method comprising:

- (a) displaying to a player a graphical indicator of an amount of time the player is eligible to play a game;
- (b) displaying to the player a decrease in said amount of time the player is eligible to play the game, wherein said displayed decrease is based on an amount of elapsed time;
- (c) if the player inputs a value amount, displaying to the player an increase in said amount of time the player is eligible to play the game; and
- (d) if the graphical indicator indicates that the player is eligible to play the game and a random determination occurs to trigger the game, determining and displaying a displayed outcome for said triggered game.

Claim 49 (withdrawn): The method of Claim 48, which includes displaying the amount of time the player is eligible to play the game as a group of bars.

Claim 50 (withdrawn): The method of Claim 48, which includes displaying a first amount of time the player is eligible to play the game a first color and displaying a second amount of time the player is eligible to play the game a second, different color.

Claim 51 (currently amended): A gaming system comprising:

at least one display device;

at least one input device;

at least one processor; and

at least one memory device which stores a plurality of instructions, which when executed by the at least one processor, cause the at least one processor to operate with the at least one display device and the at least one input device, to receive an initial value from a player through the at least one input device and, for a single game session, to:

- (a) ~~receive a wager from a player, the wager~~ determine a value total balance of corresponding to a plurality of credits, the value total balance being funded by the initial value amount;
- (b) ~~indicated~~ display a the value total balance of the credits, wherein the value total balance is:
  - (1) separate from the initial value amount, and
  - (2) ~~being~~ divisible into a plurality of fees, each one of the fees having an amount and including at least part of one of the credits;
- (c) ~~activate a game session for a game~~ to be played one or more times during ~~for an activation period, the activation period being divisible into a plurality of time intervals;~~
- (d) ~~during the activated game session~~ activation period:
  - (1) receive a plurality of play inputs from the player;
  - (2) in response to each one of the play inputs:
    - (i) perform a play of the game; and
    - (ii) provide at least one of a plurality of different outcomes based on the play of the game, at least one of the outcomes corresponding to an award, the award having an award value;
  - (3) for each time interval which expires during the game ~~session~~ activation period, automatically deduct one of the fees from

- the value total balance, wherein the ~~deduction being amount of the~~  
fee deducted is independent of any of the play inputs and the  
provided outcomes;
- (4) for each one of the provided outcomes which corresponds to one of  
the awards, ~~adding add the award value of the award to the value~~  
total balance, and causing the added award value to extend  
~~extending the activation period of the game session~~;
- ~~(e)~~ ~~determine which one of a plurality of events occurs first, the events~~  
~~including:~~
- ~~(1)~~ ~~a termination input received from the player; and~~
- ~~(2)~~ ~~the balance falling below a minimum level required for playing the~~  
~~game~~;
- ~~(f)~~(e) ~~continue the activation of the game session period until the determined~~  
~~event occurs~~ at least one of a plurality of events occur, the events  
including:
- (1) a termination input received from the player; and
- (2) the value total balance falling below a minimum level required for  
any subsequent play of the game during the activation period; and
- ~~(g)~~(f) ~~provide a the then current value total balance payout to the player in~~  
~~response to the termination input being received when the value total~~  
~~balance is above zero.~~

Claim 52 (previously presented): The gaming system of Claim 51, wherein for  
each one of the time intervals, said fees are equal to each other.

Claim 53 (previously presented): The gaming system of Claim 51, wherein each  
time interval is an equal interval of time.

Claim 54 (canceled).

Claim 55 (previously presented): The gaming system of Claim 51, wherein when  
executed by the at least one processor, the plurality of instructions cause the at least

one processor to operate with the at least one display device to indicate the at least one payout.

Claim 56 (currently amended): The gaming system of Claim 51, wherein when executed by the at least one processor, the plurality of instructions cause the at least one processor to: ~~(a)~~(g) receive a pause input; and ~~(b)~~(h) stop the deduction at least temporarily in response to the pause input.

Claim 57 (withdrawn): A gaming system comprising:

at least one display device;

at least one input device;

at least one processor; and

at least one memory device which stores a plurality of instructions, which when executed by the at least one processor, cause the at least one processor to operate with the at least one display device and the at least one input device to:

(a) display to a player a graphical indicator of an amount of time the player is eligible to play a game;

(b) display to the player a decrease in said amount of time the player is eligible to play the game, wherein said displayed decrease is based on an amount of elapsed time;

(c) if the player inputs a value amount, display to the player an increase in said amount of time the player is eligible to play the game; and

(d) if the graphical indicator indicates that the player is eligible to play the game and a random determination occurs to trigger the game, determine and display a displayed outcome for said triggered game.

Claim 58 (withdrawn): The gaming system of Claim 57, wherein when executed by the at least one processor, the plurality of instructions cause the at least one processor to display the amount of time the player is eligible to play the game as a group of bars.

Claim 59 (withdrawn): The gaming system of Claim 57, wherein when executed by the at least one processor, the plurality of instructions cause the at least one processor to display a first amount of time the player is eligible to play the game a first color and display a second amount of time the player is eligible to play the game a second, different color.



Claim 60 (currently amended): The method of Claim 42, which includes causing the at least one processor to execute the plurality of instructions to vary ~~varying~~ the value total balance with time.

Claim 61 (previously presented): The method of Claim 42, which includes automatically extending the activation period of the game session in response to each provided outcome which corresponds to one of the awards.

Claim 62 (currently amended): The gaming system of Claim 51, wherein the value total balance is a time-varying balance.

Claim 63 (previously presented): The gaming system of Claim 51, wherein when executed by the at least one processor, the plurality of instructions cause the at least one processor to automatically extend the activation period of the game session in response to each provided outcome which corresponds to one of the awards.

Claim 64 (currently amended): A gaming system comprising:

a display device;

an input device;

a processor; and

a memory device which stores a plurality of instructions, which when executed by the processor, cause the processor to operate with the display device and the input device to receive an initial value amount from a player through the input device and, for a single gaming session, to:

- (a) ~~receive a wager amount from a player~~determine a value total balance, the value total balanced being funded by the initial value amount for a game session;
- (b) determine an activation time period based on the ~~wager amount~~value total balance;
- (c) activate a game to be played one or more times during the activation time period;
- (e)(d) during the activation time period:
  - (1) receive a plurality of play inputs from a player;
  - (2) in response to each one of the play inputs:
    - (i) display a ~~game-play of the game;~~ and
    - (ii) provide ~~an any award as a result of~~ to the value total balance if the play results in a winning event;
  - (3) determine an extension time period based on each one of the provided awards; and
  - (4) extend the activation time period by each one of the extension time periods;
- (d) continue the ~~game-session-activation time period~~ until one of a plurality of events occurs~~first~~, the events including:
  - (1) a termination input from the player; and
  - (2) expiration of the activation time period including any of the extension time periods; and

- (e) as a result of the ~~first~~ event being the termination input:
  - (1) determine an amount of remaining time of the activation time period;
  - (2) determine a payout based on the remaining amount of time; and
  - (3) provide the payout to the player.

Claim 65 (previously presented): The gaming system of Claim 64, wherein the memory device includes a plurality of instructions which, when executed by the processor, cause the processor to operate with the at least one display device to indicate the payout.

Claim 66 (currently amended): The gaming system of Claim 64, wherein the memory device includes a plurality of instructions which, when executed by the processor, cause the processor to operate with the at least one display device to: (a) receive a pause input from the player; and (b) pause the activation time period at least temporarily in response to the pause input.